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291545Z Jun 04

ACTION WHA-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AF-00	AS-00	CIAE-00	CIP-00	COME-00
	CTME-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EB-00
	EUR-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	VCE-00
	NEA-00	NSAE-00	OES-00	OMB-00	TFBI-00	PM-00	FMPC-00
	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	T-00	EPAE-00	IIP-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/000W	

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3962

INFO NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BELIZE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BERN
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY HANOI
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
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AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USEU BRUSSELS 0837
USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 004951

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CCA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/27/2014

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [FR](#) [CU](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: TITLE III LIBERTAD ACT WAIVER: FRANCE

REF: STATE 135512

Classified By: A/DCM SHARON WIENER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

1. (C) Summary: In response to reftel, we met June 24 with the MFA Cuba Desk Officer, who noted that France had been sharply critical of Cuba's human rights record bilaterally and as an EU member. Even before Havana unilaterally refused EU and French assistance, France had reevaluated its position on aid to Cuba and severely restricted and restructured programs so that they would focus on those that most benefited the populace rather than Castro's regime. A failure to waive Title III of the Libertad Act for France would be harmful to our overall bilateral relations and could have a negative effect on relations with the EU. End Summary.

France Through the EU

12. (U) In a June 24 meeting, French MFA Cuba desk officer Eric Chaux stressed that the United States and France shared the common goal of a democratic Cuba with a government that respects human rights and individual freedoms. France holds to the common EU position on Cuba, adopted by the EU Council of Ministers in December 1996. This decision makes the conclusion of an EU cooperation agreement with Cuba conditional upon Havana initiating democratic reforms, protecting human rights, and introducing political freedoms. In response to Cuba's arrest of 75 dissidents in March 2003 and reinstatement of the death penalty, France, along with the other members of the European Union, condemned the abuse of human rights and fundamental freedoms in a June 5, 2003 declaration. In addition, the EU imposed penalties against Cuba, including limiting bilateral high-level governmental

visits and announcing an intention to invite Cuban dissidents to national day celebrations. France subsequently invited a number of dissidents to the July 14, 2003 Bastille Day celebration in Havana. As a result of the June 5 declaration, Cuba declined to accept any aid from the EU. The EU reaffirmed its position in regards to Cuba and the previously imposed restrictions in its statement of June 14, 2004.

France Bilaterally

13. (C) In May 2003, France reevaluated its bilateral assistance to Cuba. The result was a decision to concentrate cooperation only in those areas where it would most benefit the general populace, notably health, agriculture, professional development, the environment, and scientific research. Additionally, France suspended, among others, its bilateral police and judicial program. These actions triggered a backlash in Havana, much like the reaction triggered by the June 5 EU declaration. French actions resulted in Cuba unilaterally refusing French assistance and severing negotiations on new programs. Castro has also cut official contact between the GOC and the French Embassy in Havana. Most recently, France voted with the United States to condemn the human rights situation in Cuba in a close 22 to 21 vote April 15 at the 60th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

French Concerns About Title III Impact

15. (C) In a conversation subsequent to the June 24 meeting, Chaux indicated to PolOff that he had spoken to colleagues in other EU countries about the Title III Libertad Act and the

country-specific assessment process. He expressed concern about the possible impact of non-renewal of the Title III waiver on French and other EU members. He requested in-depth and high level consultations in advance of a final USG Title III waiver decision in regards to France. He also indicated that EU members would likely meet to discuss the possibility of Title III implementation.

Title III Waiver Recommended for France

16. (C) Comment: France, both bilaterally and through multilateral channels, has reacted strongly to Cuba's spring 2003 crackdown on dissidents. Imposition of Title III of the Libertad Act against France could have a number of negative effects on our relations with the GOF at a time when we are looking for French support in a number of critical areas. Granting a waiver would be in the U.S. national interest in order to maintain strong cooperation with France inter alia in promoting support for human rights and democratic transition in Cuba, on Haiti, and on counter-terrorism. Therefore, we strongly recommend that a Title III waiver be issued for France. At a minimum, we should take seriously the French request for high-level consultations before a Title III waiver is ruled out. End Comment.
Leach

NNNN